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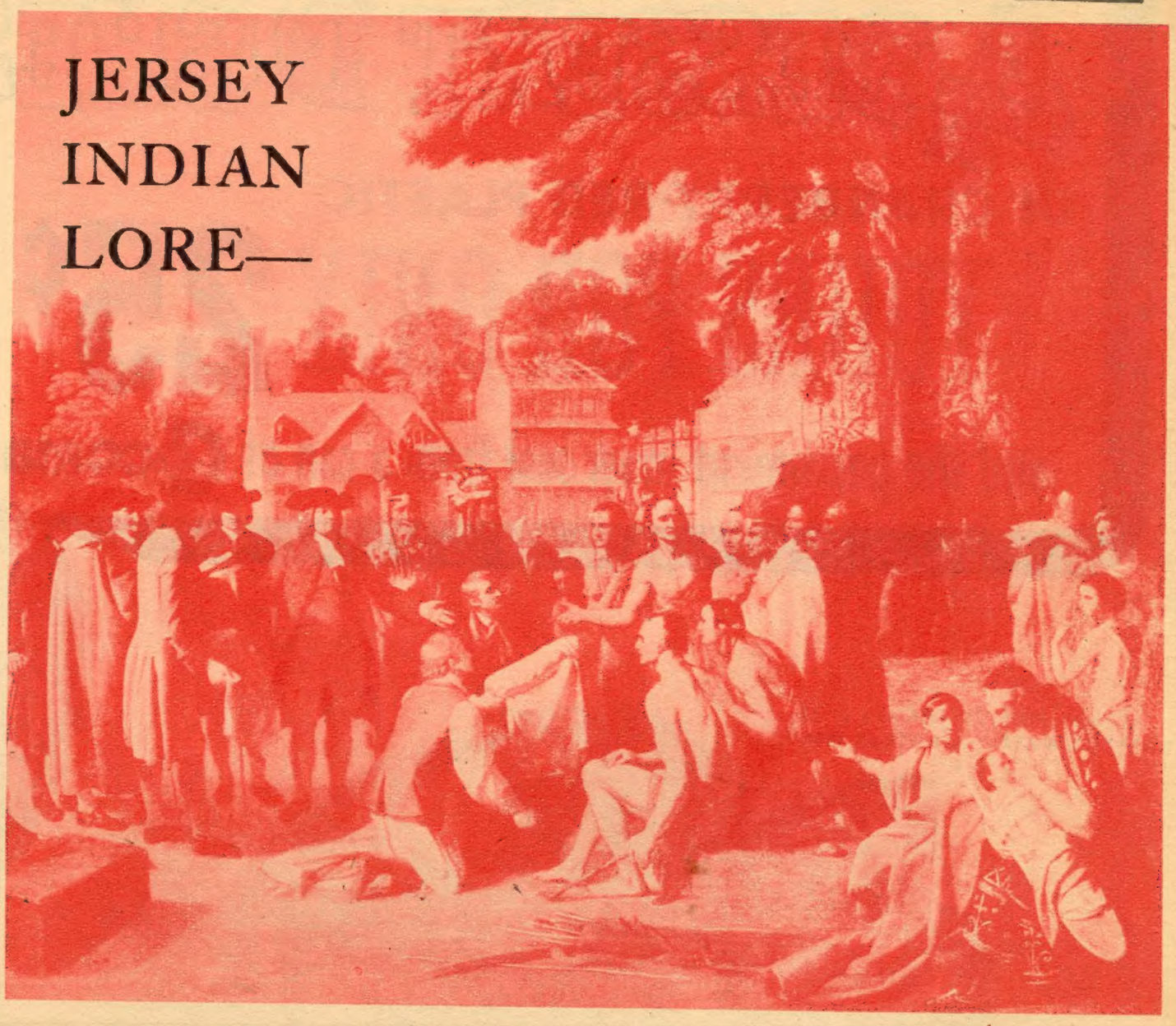
# LENAPE




Portion of Benjamin West's painting of Penn's Treaty with the Indians shows William Penn with arms outstretched offering gifts to Unami Lenape Chieftan Tammany (in white robe at right of large group) under elm at Shakamaxon, Pa.

**BY CHARLES A. PHILHOWER**

**This is the ninth in a series of articles about the Indians who once populated this state, written especially for The Newark Sunday News Magazine by Charles A. Philhower, authority on Indian lore. In subsequent articles Mr. Philhower will tell where the Indians are today and how to search for Redskin relics.**

THE government of the Lenni Lenape Indians was as simple as their religion. They believed in one supreme God, called Manitto, who ruled their spiritual lives with the help of lesser Gods called Manittowaks. Each tribe had its own chieftain and an advisory council of elders whose duties were to discuss and approve all undertakings. The chief of the Unamis, which inhabited Central Jersey, was considered the leader of the entire tribe including the Munsees to the North and the Unalachtigoes to the South.

The keynote of the Lenape government was liberty but the powers of the chiefs were decidedly limited. In pioneer days, the native villages were known as kingdoms. Populated by groups of 50 to 125 Indians, they had their own territorial boundaries in various parts of the state and a common agreement that they could trespass upon one another's lands. The writer has found Munsee burials at Cabin River below Bridgeton and conversely Unalachtigo burials at Lincoln Park.

This tied in with their belief that God or Manitto was the creator of all things for the common good. The Lenapes had faith that there is a life hereafter where the good are rewarded to the degree of good they had done on earth and where the bad were punished to the extent of wrongs they had committed. Also, in accordance with the faith of most primitive people they believed sin was expiated by sacrifice. Hence, sacrificial ceremonies were of common occurrence in the hope that the evil spirits would be appeased in event of drought, severe cold, scarcity of food, destructive floods, disease and in many other catastrophies of human life.

They had no preachers but in the case of sickness the medicine man was called. He would often appear in a suit of fur, wearing a bear's head mask with claws on hands and feet, a rattle in one hand and a charm stone suspended on a string in the other. While dancing about he would hold the charm stone before the patient's eyes and bid the evil spirit depart.

THERE were women herbal doctors who gave potions which were said to have had great virtue as curatives. Boneset, an Indian remedy widely used by the early white settlers, was administered as a tea for ailments of the stomach. Skunk oil and molasses were believed good for a cold and rattlesnake oil was rubbed on as a relief for stiff joints.

Even the children had certain responsibilities in Indian society. Each youngster was required to serve as the guardian of the next younger member of the family and so on down the line. This was done so diligently, according to reports, that not a beck or call of a younger brother or sister was neglected.

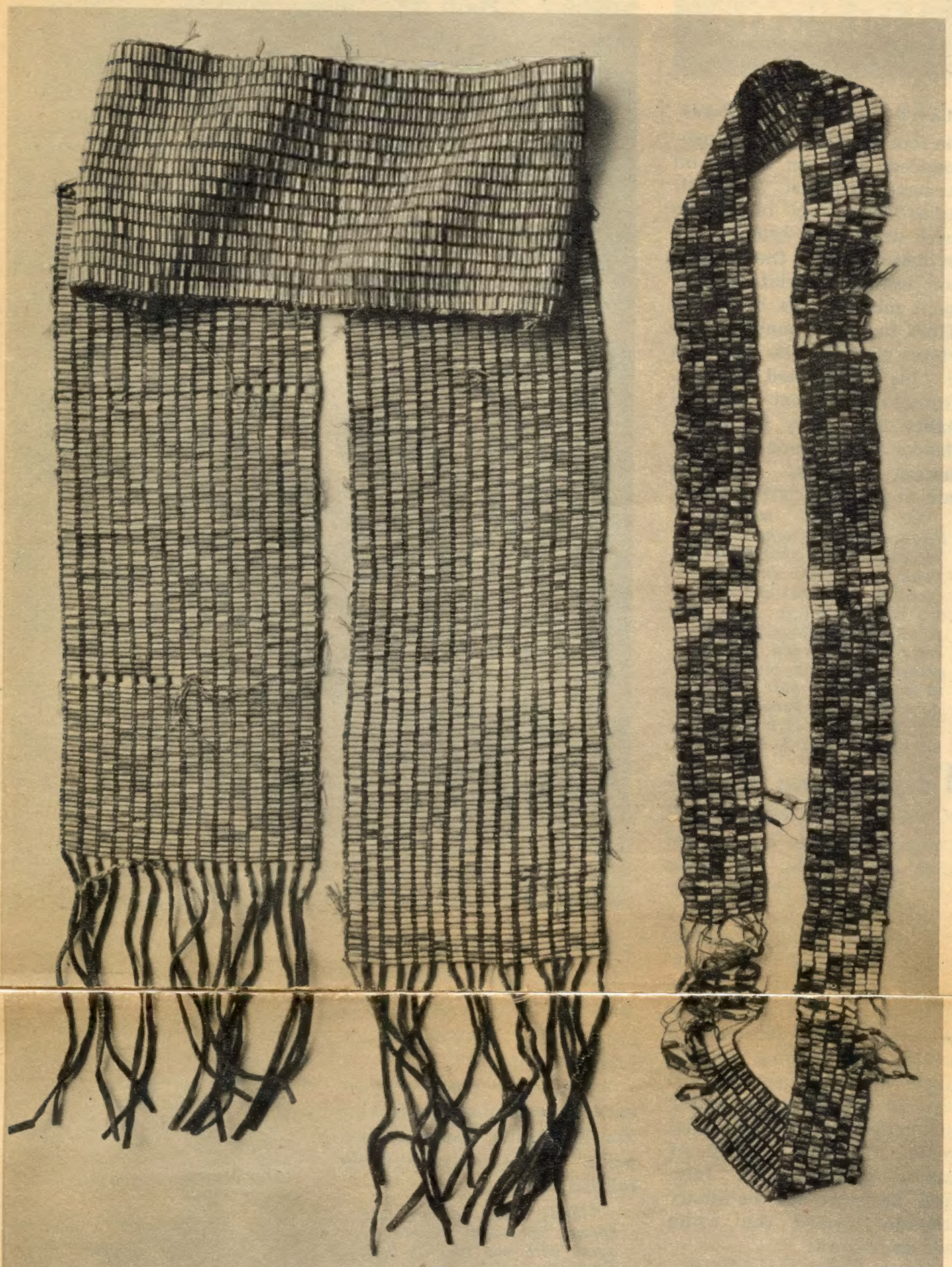
The true character of the Indian can be gleaned from a study of the lives of their leaders and their dealings with the white men.

IN the annals of the American Indians no name stands so high in the esteem of both redman and colonist as that of Tammany, sakima of the Unami Lenape, king of the Delawares, who was known during the Revolutionary period as Saint Tammany, patron saint of America. While much of his life is filled with legendary lore there is a great deal that can be placed in the category of factual history. The first official transaction between William Penn and the Indians was entered into by Tammany as the great leader of his people.

It was agreed by William Penn, the foremost friend of the Indians, and Tammany "the affable," that

*"We will be brethren, children of one father. If the Indian or the Christian shall harm the one or the other, complaint shall be made by the suffered that right might be done and when right is done the wrong shall be forgotten. We will transmit*

# CHIEFS



Wampum belts made of glass beads were highly prized by Indians who used them as a medium of exchange. William Penn gave similar belts to Lenape Chief Tammany as evidence of good faith in signing great 1683 peace treaty.

*this league between us to our children. It shall be made stronger and stronger, and be kept . . . while the creeks and rivers run and while the sun, moon, and stars endure."*

This transaction was known as the "Great Treaty." Voltaire aptly called it "the only treaty never sworn to and never broken." The signing took place under the great elm at Shakamaxon, now within the limits of Philadelphia on June 23, 1683.

TAMMANY'S name appeared on the treaty as "Tamanen" and his sign was a coiled serpent. The original parchment with signatures has been lost but there is a copy of the wording and the original wampum belt passed at the treaty is believed to still be in existance.

Benjamin West beautifully portrayed the scene in his painting, "Penn's Treaty." Tammany is the chieftain to the right under the great elm. He has a band on the forehead with feathered head dress and rings in his nose and ears. The wampum belt, passed at the time, is looped over his left shoulder. The robe worn by him has a seven pointed star on the left side with a turtle enclosed by the inner circle. This was the totem of the Unami. Gifts are being presented to Tammany and his Indians by William Penn who stands in the foreground at the left.

The Great Tammany was the third in a line of chieftains by that name. There seems to be some relation between tamaque (beaver), the animal most respected by the Indian, and the root of the word Tammany. He lived along the Neshaminy Creek in Bucks County, Pa., for many years and his dominion extended over practically all of what is now New Jersey. His place of birth is not known but he probably lived and reigned from 1650 to 1740. The year of his death is uncertain. However, an anniversary festival commemorating his birth has been held for many years on May 12. The place of his burial, it is thought, was near Chalfonte, Pa., a few miles west of Doylestown.

The Great Tammany contributed much to the ideals of freedom, peace, and fair dealing for which our Revolutionary soldiers fought.

EACH of the 21 counties in New Jersey could doubtlessly find an Indian of note who lived within its borders. Some of these would be Oratam of Bergen, Nummy of Cape May, Scyacop of Sussex, Warinanco of Union, Popomora of Monmouth, Weequahela of Middlesex, Tuccamirgan of Hunterdon and Teedyuscong of Burlington.

Teedyuscong was the last chief or sakima of the Delawares east of the Alleghenies.

*(Continued on Following Page)*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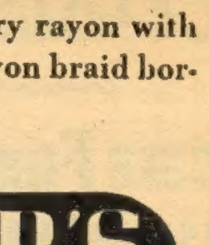

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# Jersey Indians

*(Cont'd from Preceding Page)*

His four syllable name is pronounced with the accent on the next to the last. Its meaning is "the healer" or he who cures wounds or bruises. In an abstract sense the appellation was appropriate for he spent much of his life in an effort to heal wounds of the whites made by the reactions of his ill-treated people. Through a most unusual ability in oratory he was a pleader for peace on our early eastern frontier. Once he said at a peace conference:

*"I remember well the leagues and covenants of our forefathers . . . what William Penn said to the Indians is fresh in our minds and memory and I believe it is in yours. The Indians and Governor Penn agreed well together . . . it is in your power to act the same part. I have gone among my people pleading for peace. If it cost me my life, I would do it."*

TEEDYUSCONG was one of the most able leaders of all Delawares. This was agreed upon not only by his people but also by the pioneer notables of his day. He had the best of Indian breeding, and by unknown means acquired much of the learning of the white men with whom he associated. He was a portly, fine looking Indian, quick of apprehension and with an ability as an orator unequalled in the aboriginal world. At the Treaty of Easton negotiated in July, 1756, he expressed his kindly attitude toward the white men as follows:

*"Last Spring you sent me a string (of wampum) and as I heard the good word you sent I was glad and as you told us, we believed it came from your heart. So we felt in our hearts and received what you said with joy."*

But Teedyuscong could be severe in his dealings as well. Once in a mood of anger he retorted, "Why do you council in the dark? Why do you not talk in the light?"

At another peace conference, he was most eloquent in his "fight for peace at any price." His thinking went as follows:

*"Many idle reports are spread by foolish people. I agree with you that on both sides they ought to be no more regarded than the chirping of birds in the woods.*

*"This very land under me was my land and inheritance and is taken from me by fraud . . . the same thing has been done to me as to several tracts in New Jersey. When I have sold lands fairly I look upon them to be really sold. A bargain is a bargain."*

He closed his address on this occasion with the words:

*"When you choose a spot of ground for planting you first prepare the ground, then you put the seed into the earth, but if you don't take pains afterwards you will not obtain fruit."*

The citizens of Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, have erected a monument to Teedyuscong in Fairmount Park there as a tribute to that noble "healer."

***NEXT WEEK: Why the Lenape Indians left New Jersey.***

Statue of Chief Teedyuscong in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, symbolizes the respect white men had for the Indians. Teedyuscong was a Lenape.

When ill fortune plagued the Indians and there was not enough food or rain, they offered a sacrifice to God. Drawing from State Museum at Trenton shows a Lenni Lenape brave dancing about long house fire during such a ceremony.